

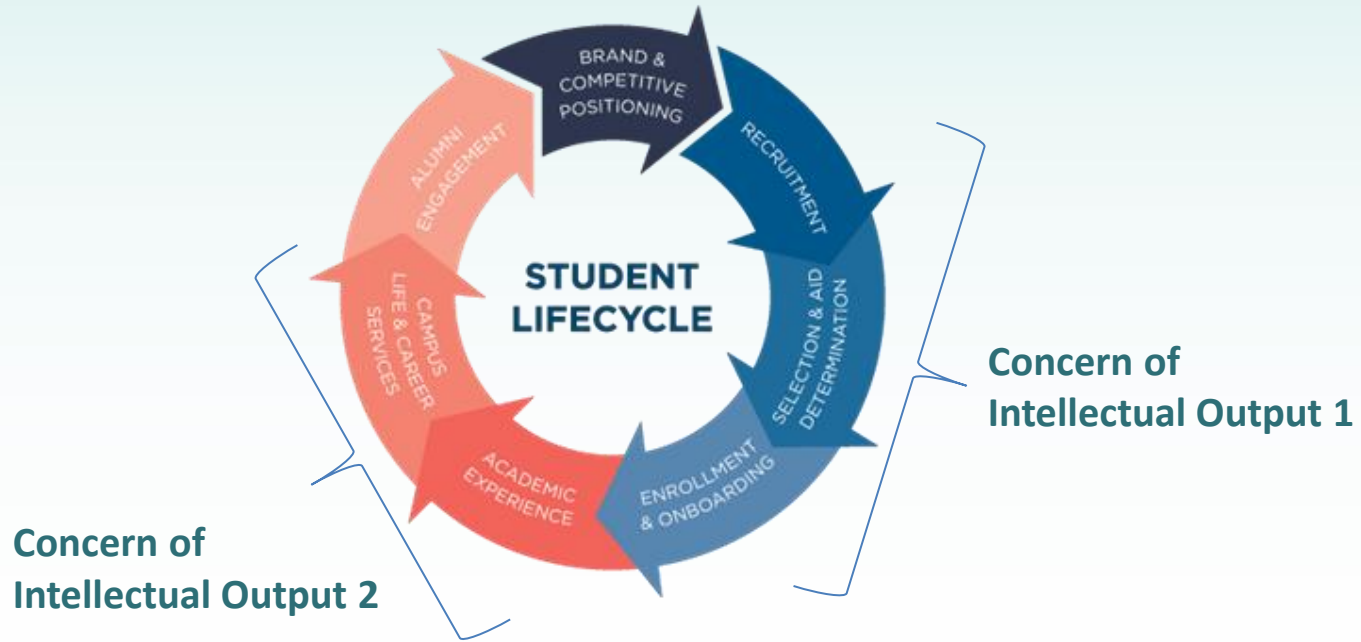


SUPPORTING UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY PATHWAY FOR REFUGEE-MIGRANTS

# Beyond Access: Supporting Refugee Student Success in European Higher Education Institutions

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# General Background



Concern of Intellectual Output 2

Concern of Intellectual Output 1

# General Background

- Need for data concerning refugee students
- Case Study: Germany
  - Drop-Out rates among students:
    - 28% of German nationals drop out of their Bachelors studies
    - compared to 41% of international students
- Data for refugee students expected to be similar to those of international student (see IO1)

# General Background

Main Reasons for high drop out rates for internationals:

- Insufficient support for foreign students during their studies
- No preparation for transition into working life

*according to Volker Meyer-Guckel, Deputy Secretary General of the Stifterverbandes für die Deutsche Wissenschaft*

# Key Findings

- There are currently very few programs that specialize in institutional support for refugee students beyond preparatory programs.
  - **Examples:** Pedagogical Follow-up (Sorbonne), Individual Consulting (University of Bologna)
- Most refugee students can then find support in programs tailored for international students or for the general student population.
  - **Examples:** Student Counseling Services (University of Cologne)

# Student Success

„By student success, we mean academic achievement, engagement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge skills, and competencies, persistence, and attainment of educational objectives“. (Kuh et al., 2011)

As one student counselor put it: “Students succeeding is university’s top priority, just as the students’ well-being, because it is connected.”

# Framework

## Factors Influencing Student Success

Social

Economic

Systemic  
Context

Educational

# Pieces of the Puzzle

## Student Perspective

- What sort of support do refugee students say they need?

## Staff Perspective

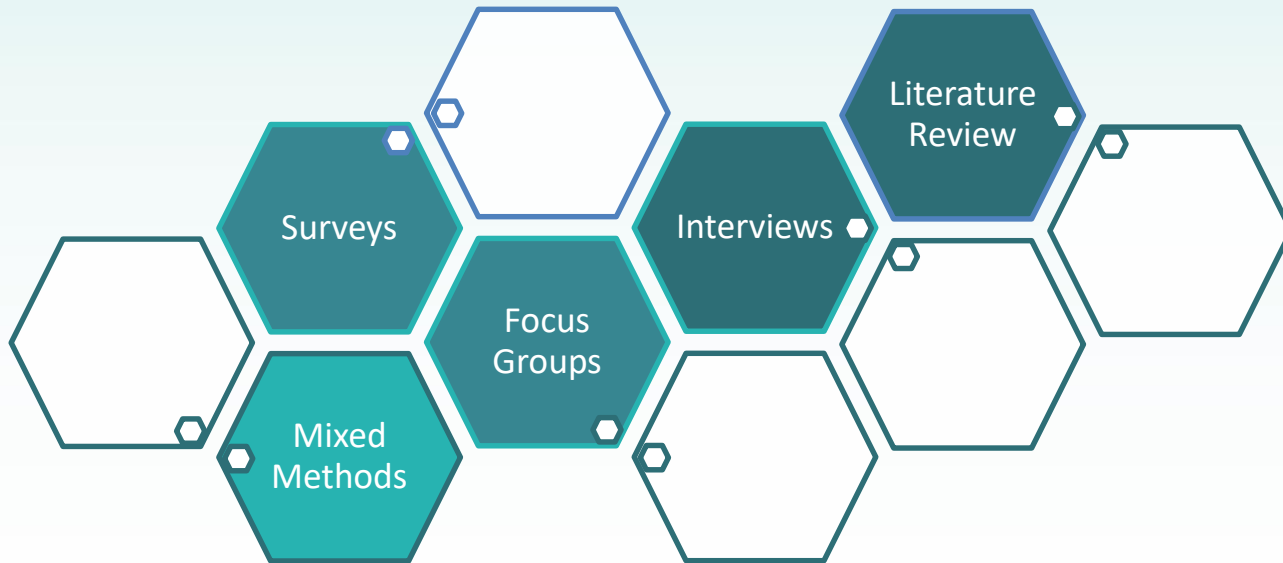
- What sort of support do HEI Staff believe students need?

## Program Design

- How do we use this information to create appropriate programs?
- Step-by-Step Guide



# Study Objective & Method



# Gathered Data

- Student Survey ~200 responses.
- A focus group was carried out with students at the UoC
- Staff Survey received ~40 responses
- Telephone interviews were conducted with staff

# Student Perspective

# Student Perspective: Social

*“Cultural differences and miscommunication. Sometimes locals seem more conservatives/closed-minded.”*

*“no interaction with local students at all”*

*“Horrible... They have a lack of solidarity and experience in life.”*

*“It is okay I guess, I kind of feel lonely all the time if I dont have one of my friends (who are also from different countries). I just can say that relations between students are not as friendly as I thought it would be.”*

*“Due to the large number of students I do not have much contact with other students. I hope that this will change in the future, because I’ve never counted among the loners.”*

# Student Perspective: Economic

*“Because of local language issues, looking for a student job or internships is harder to find compared to locals.”*

*“It is very hard to maintain the expenses.”*

# Student Perspective: Systemic Context

*“I understand the difference between the education systems and quality, however i can’t see the difference between students as big as universities here think.”*

*“the valuation of our previous studies and diplomas is not entirely fair. A pharmacist refugee for example is considered a bachelor student here while European ones are treated as master holding students.”*

# Student Perspective: Educational

*“ Study support, I'm having hard time not knowing what is important and what is not, and the teachers are not helping much.”*

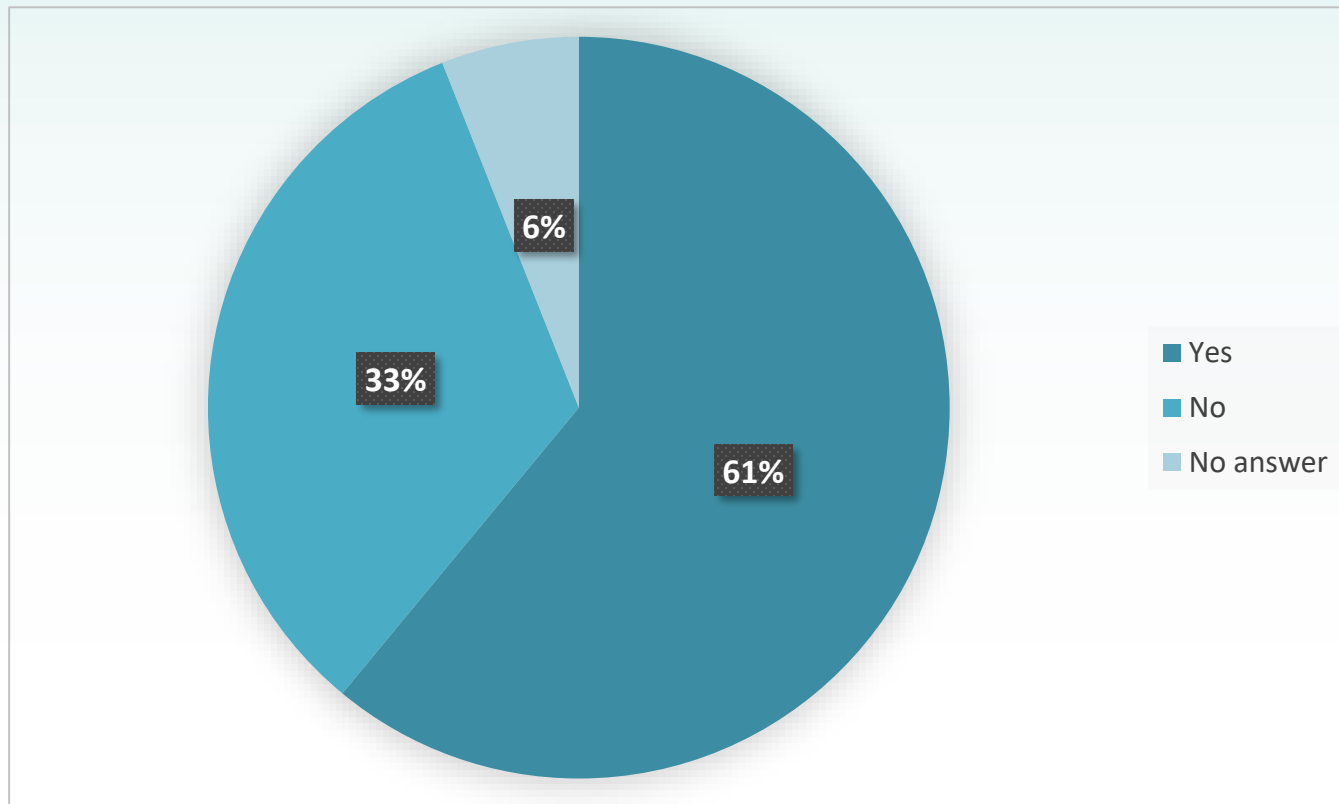
*“Studying costs me more time ”*

*“I have to translate in my head the whole time ”*

*“I feel embarrassed when I have to do a presentation with my poor language ”*

# Student Responses:

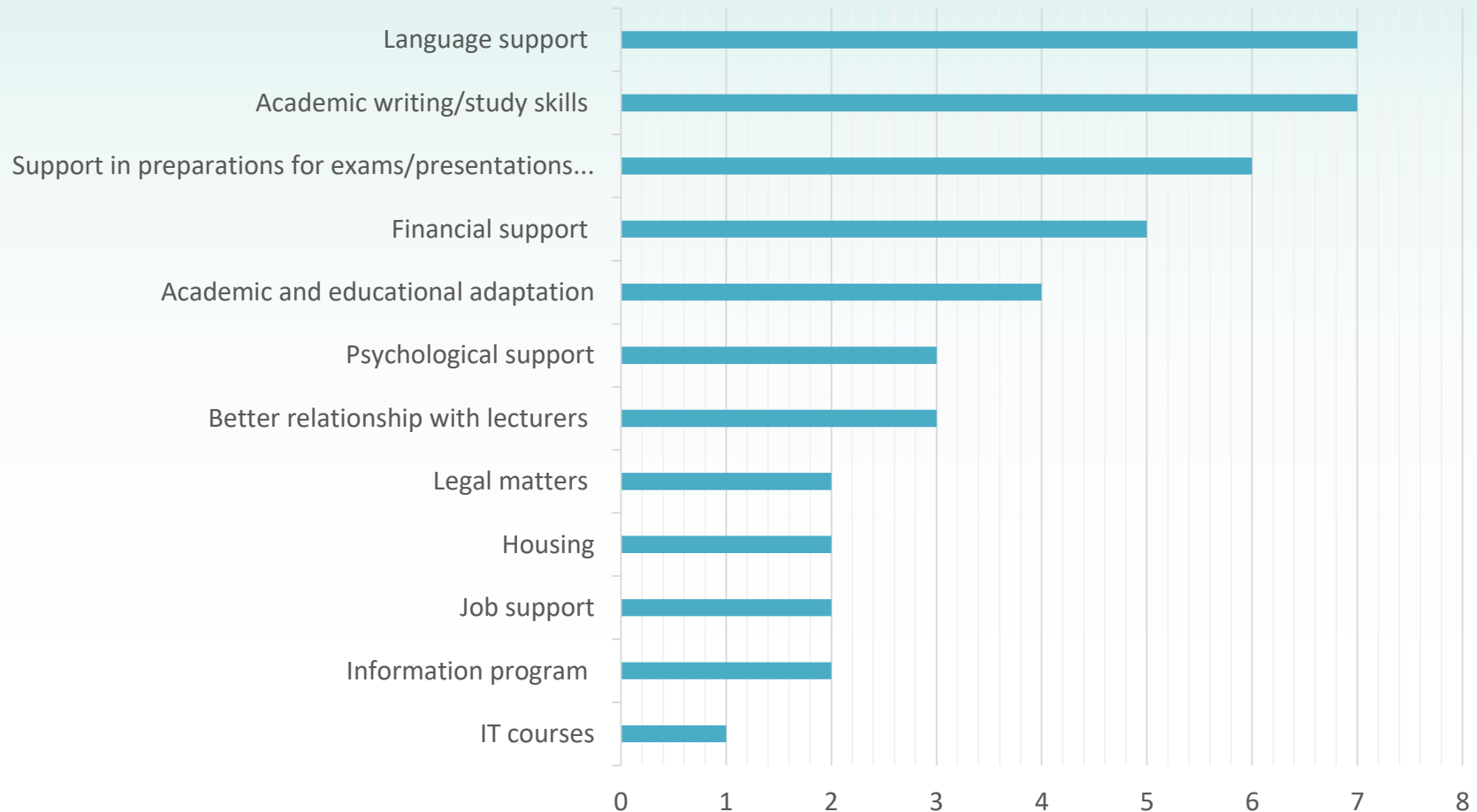
Do you need more support during your studies from the university?





# Student Responses:

What kind of support would you wish for?



# Student Responses:

- 42% say they have good interactions with other students, compared to 48% say they have little to no interactions with local students at all
- Only 13% are taking part in the buddy system
- 15-22% of all students state that they don't feel confident to voice their opinion in class

# Staff Perspective

# Staff Perspective: Social

*„Staff needs to understand the student better, understanding takes more time“*

**“Some students have severe personal circumstances. Therefore, they sometimes lay behind, some students do not have a big network in Dutch Society”**

*“Women support groups could be helpful.”*

**“Stronger mental, psychosocial aids and advisory services specifically for refugees, especially women.”**

**“Handling the trauma students experience”**

# Staff Perspective: Economic

“Older students no longer receive financial support from the government, since many refugee students have to repeat part of their educational studies, they will more likely than not end up in that category.”

“Refugee students have different priorities than dutch students. Jobs and housing are a main concern for them, which makes sense, they want to get their lives back as soon as possible.”

# Staff Perspective: Systemic Context

“Politicians need to be involved.

Universities need more support and have to be heard by the government”

**“More staff; Simplification of advisory structures; no duplications; no new, temporary projects, but an increase in the jobs that have existed for a long time.”**

*“Combination of awareness and support in their success, especially for refugee students who have experienced a lot, is definitely one of the responsibilities of a university:”*

**“For counselling much more time is needed and it is found that many refugees have difficulties to get information about what options are offered to choose a career in addition to studying in Germany.”**

“Better networking of offers, so that the offer is on the one hand more efficient and on the other hand more transparent for the refugees.”

***“ Things that are very 'normal' to us, is many times not 'normal' for our refugee students. More explanation is necessary in almost all cases. ”***

# Staff Perspective: Educational

**“A fundamentally more open structure for diversity in teaching and learning to better accommodate "diversity“.**

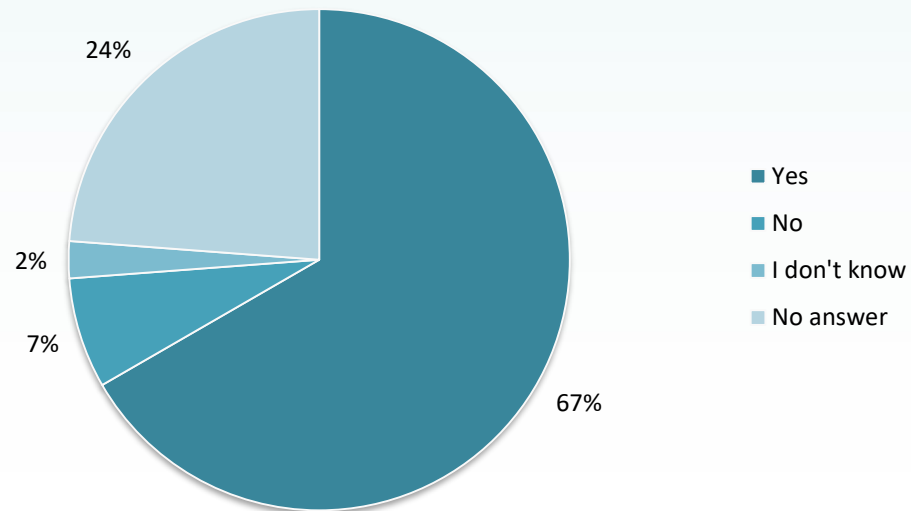
*“ You have to provide the students with the necessary tools – they can´t make it without those ”*

*“Increase intercultural competences of staff and teacher”*

**“Next to the existing support structures refugee students emphasis that they would like more facilities regarding support with language skills, academic study skills and academic writing skills.”**

# Staff Responses:

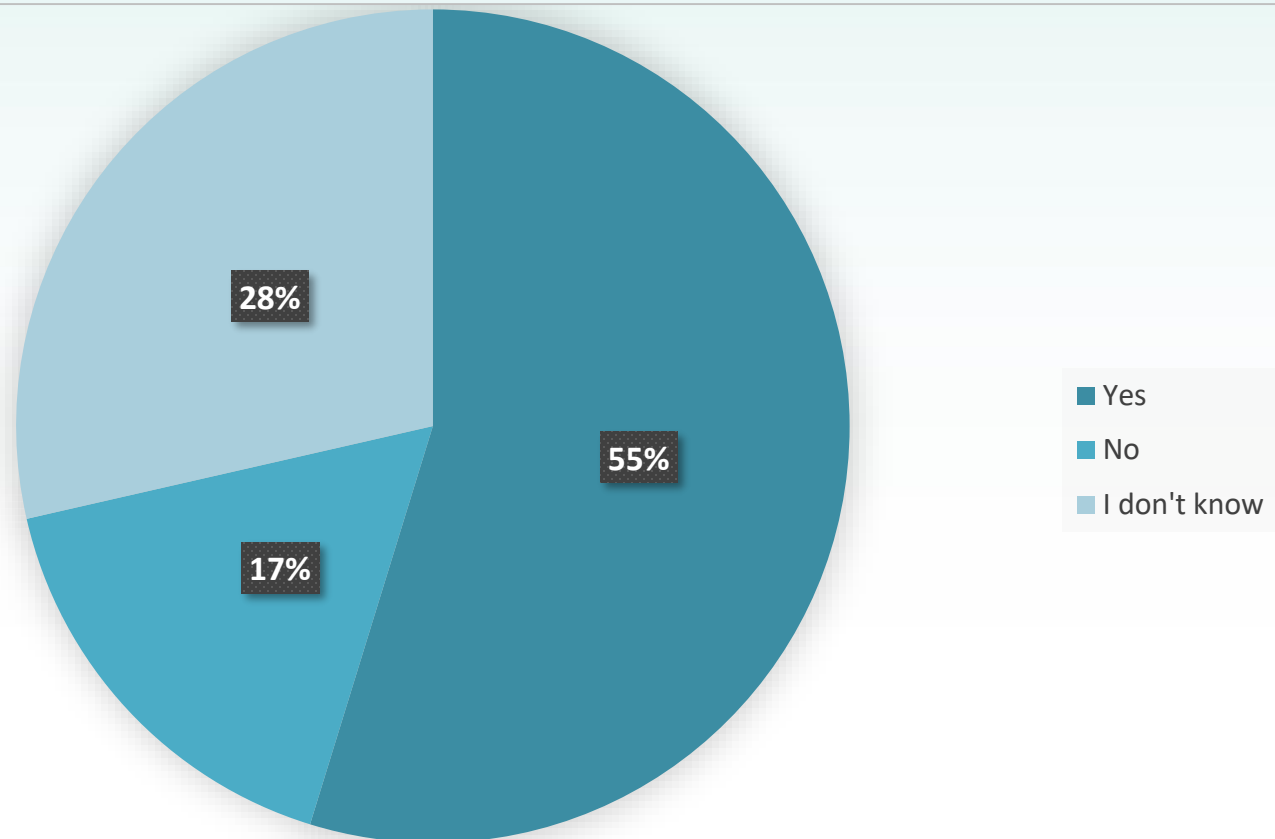
## Are you aware of the needs of refugee students?





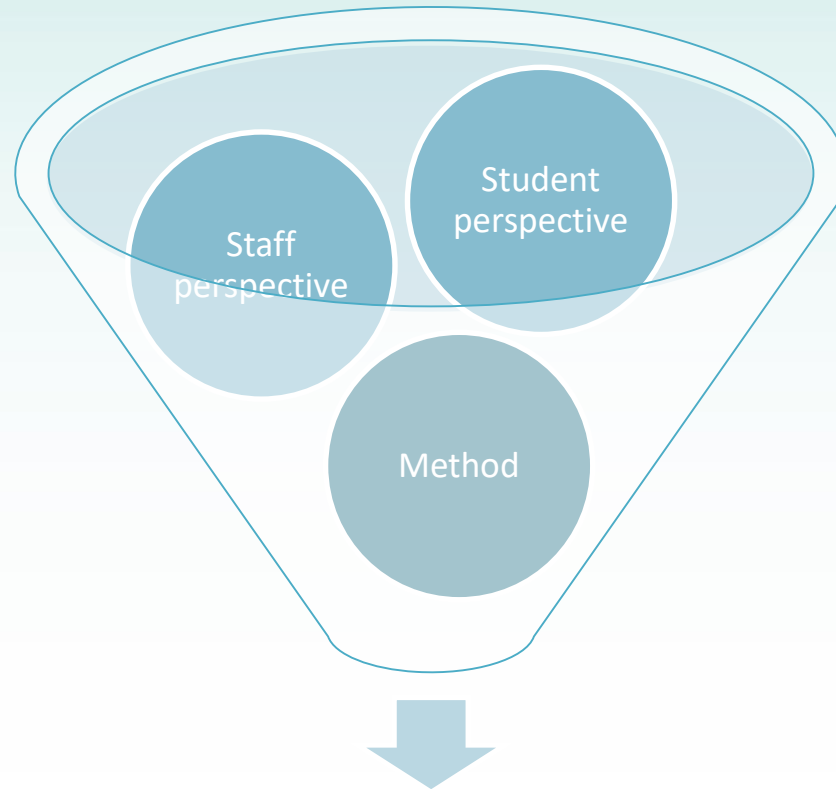
# Staff Responses:

Do you think there is a need for improvement of the student support structures at your university?



# Taking Action

# Next Steps

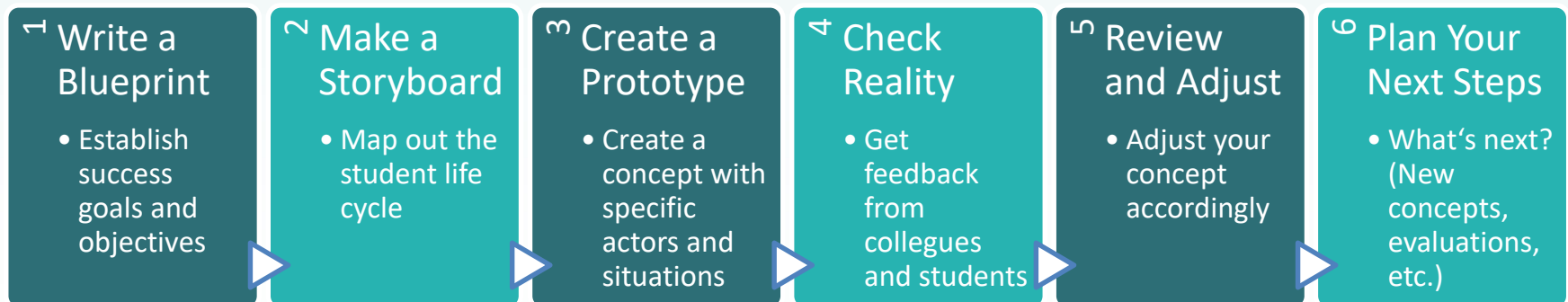


Support Programs tailored for  
refugee student success

# S.U.C.R.E Resource Toolbox



# Roadmap for Project Development





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*Thank you!*